

# Pressing a registered hotkey gives you the foreground activation love

 [devblogs.microsoft.com/oldnewthing/20090226-00](http://devblogs.microsoft.com/oldnewthing/20090226-00)

February 26, 2009



Raymond Chen

One category of application that people complained about is the application launcher which keys off a hotkey and doesn't get the foreground love.

Well, except that windows with registered hotkeys *do* get the foreground love.

After you call the `RegisterHotKey` function to register a hotkey, the window manager will send you a `WM_HOTKEY` message when the user presses that hotkey, and along with it, you will get the foreground love. If you call `SetForegroundWindow` from inside your hotkey handler, the foreground window will change according to your instructions.

A special administrator-only list of programs which are exempt from `SetForegroundWindow` rules would just be adding another round to the game of walls and ladders. All that'll happen is that programs, when they install, will place themselves in the *Exempt from the normal rules* list, and you're back where you started.

“Oh no, I'll super-protect that registry key so that the only way to add an entry to it requires a human being to respond to a dialog box confirming that the entry is being added.”

Well, for one thing, that doesn't actually stop installers with administrator privilege, since they can just remove the super-protection and update the key anyway. (Administrator privilege is like that.) And even if you somehow manage to super-protect the setting (how? beats me), the next stage is application vendors (or system administrators attempting to deploy the application across their company) asking for a programmatic way to add their program to your super-protected list of exemptions. And then you're back to where you were.

Raymond Chen

**Follow**

